



**PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
Minutes of Regular Meeting
December 11, 2018 6:00 p.m.
Municipal Building II, Room 100
90 E. Civic Center Drive, Gilbert, Arizona 85296**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Les Presmyk, Chair
Barbara Guy (By Phone)
Gilbert Honeycutt
Jennifer Jones
Mark LaPorte
Edward Madrid

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Robert Ferron, Vice Chair
Matthew Roberts
Christopher Wharton

STAFF PRESENT:

Robert Carmona, Acting Parks and Recreation Director
John Kennedy, Parks and Recreation Manager
Rocky Brown, Parks and Recreation Business Manager
Denise Merdon, Special Events, Marketing & Sponsorships
Linda Ayres, Admin. Support Staff Supervisor

COUNCIL LIAISON PRESENT:

Eddie Cook, Councilmember (By Phone)

GUESTS:

Sean Wozny, Kimley-Horn
Scott Wallis, AZ Ice

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Presmyk called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.
- 2. ROLL CALL:** Denise Merdon called the roll and determined that a quorum was present.
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS PRESENT:** The public may comment on matters within the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Board, but not on the agenda. The Board's response is limited to responding to criticism, asking staff to review a matter commented upon, or asking that a matter be put on a future agenda. There were no communications from citizens.

CONSENT ITEMS

- 5. NONE.**

PRESENTATIONS

- 6. OCOTILLO BRIDGE UPDATE (ST054):** Ryan Blair of the Gilbert CIP Team and Sean Wozny with Kimley-Horn were introduced. Ryan Blair reviewed the last meeting with the Parks Board in which six theme options for the Ocotillo Bridge project were presented and voted on. The same options and survey regarding the bridge design were put online for the entire Town of Gilbert and HOAs in the area.

Sean Wozny reviewed the Ocotillo Bridge project, part of the new Regional Park located on Queen Creek and Higley Roads. The Bridge would span across Queen Creek Wash, the Chandler Heights basin, and then go underneath the RWCD irrigation canal. The Design Team had developed six themes which were presented to the Arts Commission. A dotocracy exercise narrowed the choices down to four themes: Desert Oasis, Waterways and Washes, Mountains, and Desert Canyons.

There was outreach with the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee (MYAC) and 30 students discussed the project themes. The MYAC group also held a dotocracy exercise to vote on the concepts. Gilbert Digital created a video of the four design themes to present on the website and mobile devices. Over 885 people participated in the online survey and the Desert Oasis theme received the most votes with 46%. There were additional outreach opportunities with Perry High School and Gilbert High School, although the overall results have not changed. Moving forward, there may be some opportunities to involve area high schools and other groups as well as the Arts Commission as the project goes into design. The survey results were broken down by demographics and type of device used. Respondents were mostly female at 73% and the devices most used were smart phones.

Ryan reviewed the project timeline. The first goal was to obtain a cost estimate of the aesthetic features and the Bridge itself. The second goal was to come up with a concept or theme for the Bridge with public input. Both of those goals have now been reached. The next step is to take that information and shelve it for future use in the design process for the Ocotillo Bridge. Due to the dollar figure for this project, the plan is to go out for street bonds in FY2020. If approved, the project will move forward to design in FY2022. The design process will include soliciting a design firm and reaching out to architects and artists. The Arts Commission has an architect on board that is willing to provide services. The school system may be involved in the artistic component. Construction will be funded in FY2023.

BOARD QUESTIONS:

Chair Presmyk asked if the bond election would take place in the fall of 2019 or the spring of 2020? He noted the regular election would be held in the fall of 2020. Robert Carmona felt the bond election would take place in the fall of 2020. Ryan stated the project design was originally planned for FY2020, although due to the dollar figure it was pushed to a bond election in 2020.

- 7. TORTOISE HABITAT UPDATE:** John Kennedy advised the Board that this item received direction from Town Council to move forward under the direction of Councilmember Anderson. He will work with the Naturalist, Jennie Rambo, Arizona Game and Fish, and the Scouts to refine the plan and to address any potential concerns regarding security. We should have an update in the next 30 to 45 days. Once we have feedback from Arizona Game and Fish and the Scouts and all are in agreement on the plan, the project will go into the phasing. The Scouts would work on each phase of the project with staff approval. John will provide regular updates to the Board.

Chair Presmyk asked if the project had full Council authorization to go forward under Councilmember Anderson so that it would not need to come back to the Parks Board or to Council for further approval. Robert Carmona stated that was correct.

- 8. AZ ICE UPDATE:** Scott Wallis of AZ Ice reviewed the four components of the business model: Figure Skating, Hockey, Public Skating, and the Park Tavern.

Figure Skating - Mark Fitzgerald is the Skating Director. The Learn to Skate program allows people to try skating for free. Classes are offered up to the highest level of competitive figure skating, in which AZ Ice has grown to the top 50 in the country. AZ Ice splits out the Learn to Play Hockey into a separate program. Learn to Skate classes are offered on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and are always full. Additional classes were created for different levels in order to meet the demand. The Holiday Show was held last weekend with 800 people in attendance.

Hockey – Youth, Adult, and Travel Hockey are offered. Youth Hockey is run by Bob Platt, and is up to 1,600 participants at different levels up to AA, from ages 6 to 18. Learn to Play is the backbone of the Hockey program, offered eight times a year. The free four-week Learn to Play sessions include a helmet, stick, gloves, and skates. The program usually fills up and there is a wait list.

The Coyotes offer the Little Howlers program across the Valley three times a year. AZ Ice offers the Learn to Play every month. As kids get to high school age many stop playing, although there has been more retention than ever in the last two years. The Coyotes are adding DEK Hockey to the school PE curriculum, which may

grow into roller hockey and then ice hockey. Hockey is a male-dominated sport, although the female membership is up 10%. The Coyotes have own Travel Hockey Team out of the Arcadia location and some of the girls moved over there.

Adult Hockey runs nightly with start times between 8 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. This season, it is up to 49 teams and it has grown mostly through word of mouth. There are 600 players in the Men's League and 100 play in multiple leagues. An Adult Skills class is held on Sundays at 3:40 p.m. and is run by Valley hockey legend Kurt Goar and his wife, Holly Harrington.

Travel Hockey is a partnership with the Arizona Hockey Union. Since the Ice Den bought the Chandler location, it is only offered at Gilbert. The Junior A Team was a high-level competitive hockey team that folded this past year. That was a blessing in disguise as it allowed AZ Ice to grow the Adult League as well as move some of the high school team practices to the after-school time slot.

Public Skate - Open Skate is held weekdays 9:45-11:45 a.m. and 2-5 p.m. and on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30-9:30 p.m. It is very crowded with the Learn to Skate program. There is outreach to church groups, Gilbert Public Schools for summer camps, ASU, and other groups for private ice events. The Chabad Jewish Center of Gilbert held their Hanukkah party at AZ Ice. This is a revenue stream that was not previous maximized and now they are running out of night slots.

Birthday Parties – About 15 birthday parties are held a month during public skate times. Az Ice is reaching out to retailers in the area to cross pollinate and offer discounts to bring in more business.

Events:

- Ice Breakers Youth Hockey Tournament was held the weekend of October 19.
- 3 on 3 Winter Classic held the weekend of December 28. Two games are run simultaneously on half ice for both kids and adults.
- MLK Tournament (January) – Teams from all over the country
- Arizona Hockey Union Tournament (February) – Up to 300 teams from across the country and Canada. Last year, a team from China was here for 3 weeks working with Kurt Goar. This year, we may have three teams coming in from China. AZ Ice works to maximize tourism through Stay and Play hotel partnerships.
- Copper State Figure Skating Championship (May).

Park Tavern – Opened a year ago this month. There were some changes in the design and the menu. There is a fantastic patio overlooking the baseball fields. The late-night Adult Hockey crowd fills the Tavern. There are Open Mic Nights every other Monday. To be successful, we need to bring in the neighborhoods as well.

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

- 9. IAP UPDATE:** Linda Ayres reported on two new items under Optimization. Interviews are being held for Grounds Maintenance Workers and Admin positions for Cactus Yards and programming has been finalized. Robert Carmona will provide a detailed update on Park Development later in the agenda.

AGENDA ITEMS

- 10. JANUARY MEETING DATE & LOCATION:** Denise Merdon reminded the Board that the January meeting date will be changed to January 15, 2019, 6:00 P.M. as there is a Town Council meeting on the regular Board meeting date. The January meeting will be a joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Foundation and the plan is to hold the meeting off-site at Cactus Yards. A confirmation on the location will be sent out with the agenda. Robert Carmona advised that the Cactus Yards facility will be about 80% complete by mid-January.

11. NEW PARK UPDATES: Robert Carmona provided detailed updates on the new park facilities.

Regional Park – Phase 1 is scheduled to open September 2019 with the Playground, Splash Pad, Plaza Play Area, and some of the parking. After Phase 1 is open, Phase 1B will start construction and is scheduled to open in the spring of 2020. Phase 1B will consist of 16 pickleball courts, 6-8 tennis courts, a few basketball courts, 6 sand volleyball courts, the Amphitheater, and Great Lawn. Phase 1 is at 100% design and Phase 1B is currently at 60% design. The Phase 1B budget will be finalized by the end of January and an update will be provided to the Board in February.

The Mountain is the main play feature of the playground area with multiple ways to enter, including ADA access. A variety of climbing features will cater to all levels and meet all safety requirements. This will be a very unique playground feature in Arizona. The Mountain has a large slide and there are six other slides throughout the entire play area.

The Plaza area will be a popular spot for parents and younger children ages 2-5. Decorative fencing has been added along the perimeter with entrances along the walkway.

The Splash Pad is over 6,000 square feet and will be one of the largest municipal splash pads in Arizona. The size was increased from the original plan due to the expected 300 to 400 kids at a time on the weekends. We have one shot to make this feature the appropriate size. The Splash Pad will have over 55 different water features and the 6,000 square-foot perimeter will have seating and shade. The turf area along the back side will be angled for lounging. The Splash Pad area will also be fenced along the perimeter to contain the users. Lots of led lighting will provide nighttime interest.

The 10-acre Great Lawn is planned in Phase 1B and will hold about 10,000 people. A large corporate ramada will provide an area for large parties and weddings. The Amphitheater was researched to be able to accommodate many different types of events. A portion of the Great Lawn will have a slight slope and will level off at the top, splitting the area to hold multiple events.

A Board member asked about the plans for an Amphitheater structure? One of the previous options incorporated a flexible type of fabric. At this point, Phase 1B is still in the design phase and the research showed a preference to provide only the anchor points for a structure and conduit. Most of the professional companies that host large events bring in their own trussing, sound systems and other equipment. The design team with Mark Taylor works with special events such as the Austin Music Festival. They have looked at the Great Lawn area to make sure it can accommodate every type of event. Conduit will be installed while the ground is open with various access points for items such as digital kiosks, speakers, and cameras.

Will smaller ramadas be available to reserve for birthday parties? Yes, there will be 10 to 12 smaller 20 x 20 ramadas spread throughout the Playground and Splash Pad areas that can be reserved. The reservation process was reviewed. Gilbert is the only Valley city to offer online ramada reservations and there has been a 30-40% increase in rentals over the past few years. We have had a lot of requests for corporate events, although we did not have a large enough facility to handle such events. Some of the other Valley cities do not offer reservations and people just have to wait for an available ramada.

What is the schedule for the water features? Will the water be turned off during the winter season? The operational details have not been worked out as of yet. The intent is to not have the water turned off for long as Arizona is fairly warm. The hours may be shortened during certain times of the year or for maintenance periods. Denise Merdon advised that the water is lowered at the Water Tower splash pad during the winter. We want to be consistent so that customers are aware of the times of operation.

What materials are used in the Mountain structure and flooring? The outer covering is perforated metal so it is breathable but not climbable. Inside the Mountain there are a lot of ropes, nets, and a rubber type of material. The flooring will be the tot turf material. No surface has a fall zone over 48 inches, well below the national standard of 72 inches.

Will the Parks Board have an opportunity to preview the Park before it opens? Yes, the intent is to have a soft opening to see how children will interact with different features. Every part of the Mountain will be accessible to people up to 6'6".

Desert Sky Park - Currently under construction, Phase 1 will be completed in the summer of 2019 with four multi-use fields, a lake, playground, ramadas, and parking. At build-out, there will be 16 multi-use fields. Musco state-of-the-art LED lighting will be utilized to minimize light penetration for the surrounding neighborhoods. The playground area will have an American Ninja Warrior-style obstacle course with a variety of challenges. This has become a popular playground feature and encourages friendly competition. It will provide a good balance to the playground experiences offered in the Town of Gilbert. There will also be a smaller-scale typical playground.

The Public Safety Training Facility will be located next to Desert Sky Park.

Cactus Yards - The construction portion will be completed in December, and Parks and Recreation will be operating the facility with an expected start date of February 9, 2019. The facility holds 8 replica ball fields, indoor multi-use field, batting cages, and restaurants. We are at 90% bookings for weekend tournaments. The only availability is in mid-summer and maintenance will be scheduled during that timeframe. The programming has just been released for leagues and youth activities. Some initial feedback was received from ultra-competitive adult league players who were upset that A-level adult sports would not be offered seven nights a week. The direction for the facility is to have a blend of youth and adult sports. Registration opened this morning and there are already 50 softball teams registered for leagues.

Town Council had approved a \$2.5 million budget for the maintenance, repairs, and aesthetic improvements to the facility. Many of those projects will kick off mid-December and we are currently well under budget.

There is a great partnership with Craft Culinary Concepts on the restaurant facilities. Sliders Grill will offer table service with a high-quality menu at very reasonable prices compared to other stadiums. Mobile vending will also be offered in the grandstands and fields. All of the food is made fresh and there will be no microwaves on-site. Craft Culinary Concepts is investing \$250,000 into the facilities, and will offer BBQ nights and special events. The restaurant will be completed by mid-January and the Grand Opening is set for February 9, 2019.

- 12. ARIZONA COYOTES OPPORTUNITY:** Rocky Brown advised that the Town was approached by the Arizona Coyotes with a DEK Hockey opportunity. The Coyotes Hockey Club is looking for partners in the metro Phoenix area, specifically Parks and Recreation agencies, to install a roller hockey DEK rink. Gilbert Parks and Recreation is a preferred location because of the existing partnership with AZ Ice. The initiative is funded through the National Hockey League Industry Growth Fund. The Coyotes would install a complete state-of-the-art DEK Hockey rink, 150 x 75 feet. People can play using shoes, roller skates, or inline skates. This is an introductory type of Hockey that can transition over to Ice Hockey. The Coyotes staff would act as a resource assisting with installation as well as operations and marketing. There is currently a DEK rink at Grand Canyon University.

A location at Cactus Yards is being considered, as there is no room by AZ Ice. There is a grass area at the back portion of Cactus Yards which had previously been designated for corporate events, although it was not utilized. It is just outside of the gates between the Park and the neighborhood. The concession stand at the Soccer Pavilion has a window out to that grass area and Craft Culinary Concepts plans to hold BBQ nights in that area. Coyotes representatives walked the site with staff and believe it will work.

The Cactus Yards project is well under budget. The Town commitment would include installing a cement pad (150 x 75 feet) and the Coyotes would build the DEK rink on top. It would be a great use for this underutilized area. Cactus Yards will be staffed during open hours. The Town already has a partnership with the Diamondbacks to redo one of the replica fields. Craft Culinary is connected to the Arizona Cardinals. This would provide another partnership with a professional sports team. The Coyotes' cost would be about \$185,000 for the rink.

Town Commitment:

- Install concrete pad \$30-50K
- General upkeep of rink, cleaning floor and dasher boards
- Grow the game through program offerings
- Retain applicable liability coverage

Benefits to Town:

- Partnership with another local professional sports team
- New amenity to offer the public
- Additional revenue stream from programming options
- Create synergy for the sports offerings at one location

BOARD QUESTIONS:

How hot does the surface get in the summer? The surface material has holes to help with dust and rain. It is plastic and it can get hot in the summer. Rocky will ask for more details.

Can other sports be played on that type of rink, such as basketball or volleyball? Yes, and the Coyotes are open to multi-use options.

Was there consideration to place this at AZ Ice at Crossroads? Most of the grass area is used for fields and there is a commitment on the open four acres with the Castle Golf project. Robert Carmona stated the staffing and monitoring are a big part of where this can be located. With all of the sports programming, Cactus Yards will be staffed during all open hours. No other park is staffed full-time. Denise stated this would provide another opportunity for families that are already at Cactus Yards for softball or soccer.

Is there a place at the Regional Park where a rink could go? There may be some locations at the Regional Park where a rink could fit near the sand volleyball courts or basketball courts. The issue goes back to the staffing. The Freestone Recreation Center and McQueen Recreation Center have a decent amount of recreation staff. Les Presmyk noted there may be a future phase at either Desert Sky or the Regional Park that could include a similar amenity. Although, what better opportunity to see how it will be used and accepted by the community, especially where there will be full staff programming and oversight.

Robert stated if there is enough interest from the Board, staff could work on getting quotes, explore other partnership opportunities and programming options and come back to the Board with more details.

As the location is near a residential area, will it be lit at night in a way that will not impact the neighbors? That grass area already has lighting and the project would not need full sports lighting. Now that the town will be taking over the Park, we are working on the relationship with the neighborhood. This is a park amenity that could be accessed directly from the neighborhood as it is outside the main gates for Cactus Yards. There will be no seating and it is not a loud activity. It is actually a good distance from the homes. The location was reviewed on a map as to the proximity to the neighborhood. To the north is a school as well as the SRP power lines and trail. There is an irrigation pond that would provide a buffer. The decibel level at existing DEK rinks can be measured.

Would there be enough parking at this location? Parking would be available in the regular facility parking lot and people would walk through the facility. There are 700 parking spots available and overflow parking by the frontage road. There is no parking on the back side of the facility, only fire lanes. There was concern that all of the parking would be taken up for the ballparks and people would not want to walk the distance to the rink with their equipment. There would only be about 12 people on the rink at a time, which would not require a lot of parking. There is also a drop-off point at the circular drive. The Town has a good relationship with the church and there is an agreement to share parking facilities when overflow parking is needed. Councilmember Cook has been very active in the community listening to concerns and staff will make adjustments in the operations.

Staff may approach the Parks and Recreation Foundation to help with the cost for the cement pad. There could be the potential for sponsorships on the dasher boards. At the January Board meeting at Cactus Yards, the group can walk out to the site.

Staff will work with the neighborhood to get feedback on the questions raised, and will obtain cost estimates, research other opportunities and report back to the Parks Board. If there is a desire to move forward, the project would be presented to Council in February.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

13. MINUTES-Consider Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 13, 2018:

MOTION: Gil Honeycutt moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 13, 2018; seconded by Mark Laporte. Motion passed 6-0.

COMMUNICATIONS

14. REPORT FROM CHAIR: Les Presmyk reported on the successful Gilbert Days Parade.

15. REPORT FROM BOARD MEMBERS: There were no reports.

16. REPORT FROM COUNCIL LIAISON: Councilmember Cook wished everyone and their families a wonderful Holiday. There are many festivities around Gilbert to enjoy. On behalf of the Mayor and Council, he thanked the Board for their willingness to serve the community with all of the big projects that are coming in 2019.

17. REPORT FROM STAFF LIAISONS: John Kennedy reported on a successful Youth Fishing Day this past weekend at Discovery Park with a record-setting 560 participants. People were lined up by 6 a.m. in the fog because we were giving away 200 fishing poles that were donated by Cabela's. Breakfast with Santa and the Holiday Tea at the Community Center had 500 participants. The Parks Department float will be in the Fiesta Bowl Parade in Phoenix on December 29. Over the Holiday break, we are offering various camps for kids

Robert Carmona advised the Board to save the date of February 9, 2019 for the Grand Opening of Cactus Yards. A reminder of the date and a schedule of activities will be sent out to the Board.

Rocky Brown reported on the Annual PKID meetings held two weeks ago. Eleven meetings were held over four nights and at least two property owners showed up from each neighborhood. Most of the major projects have been done and the focus is now on aesthetic items such as wall painting. Out of the 2,094 homes, there was only one email to the Mayor and Council from an unhappy owner.

Linda Ayres was recently elected as Board President of the APRA (Arizona Parks and Recreation Association). Currently, Gilbert has an agency membership consisting of one director, four staff, and nine board members. Linda requested to change the membership to allow additional staff members. The cost for individual staff is \$100 per person. The Agency cost is \$975. If we forego the agency membership, for an additional \$25 we could have 10 staff members sign up. That would allow more staff members to attend professional development workshops. The 2019 APRA conference will be held in August in Oro Valley.

Chair Presmyk suggested this item be placed on the agenda for January or February. APRA is a great organization and the workshops provide great opportunities to learn more about parks programs. It would be nice considering the number of new Parks Board members. Linda was congratulated on being elected APRA Board President for FY2020-21.

18. UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- The Gilbert Days Parade and 10K/Half Marathon were successful with 1,500 runners and minimal issues with the road closures. Staff and the Digital Communications team did a great job getting the word out and the multiple signs put up for the road closures.
- The 12Ks of Christmas this past weekend had 1,300 runners with similar road closures. There was no negative feedback.

- The Annual Water Tower Holiday Lighting was held on November 29. There are a lot of changes and improvements planned for next year. The event has become very popular and there is the potential for street closures in the future due to the number of patrons. Music was synchronized with the Tower Lighting at regular intervals.
- Light the World - Three community giving machines were placed at Water Tower Plaza. Gilbert was one of five locations chosen for the project, which provides opportunities for people to make charitable donations through a vending machine format to benefit global as well as local nonprofit organizations. Other cities involved are Salt Lake City, New York City, London, and Manila. Choir groups performed to raise awareness of the giving machines. As of yesterday, the giving machines have raised \$240,000 over two weeks.
- Riparian After Dark features luminaries and festive light displays around the lake. There are two weekends left, December 16-17 & 21-22, 5:30-9 p.m. The event began last weekend with 3,000 people on the first night, and just under 10,000 for the weekend. It is a free event. Snacks and hot chocolate will be available for purchase and donations will be accepted for local non-profit organizations. December 14, Gilbert Fire and Rescue will be collecting new children's toys. December 15, Maricopa Animal Rescues will collect pet supplies. December 21, Gilbert Promotional Corp. Galloping Soles will collect new tennis shoes. December 22, Just Serve will collect new socks, winter hats, and gloves.

CONCLUSION

19. MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Presmyk wished everyone a happy and safe Holiday. Commissioner Honeycutt moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Barbara Guy. The motion passed 6-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 P.M.

ATTEST:

Les Presmyk, Chair

Denise Merdon, Staff Liaison

(TE: 14082507)